The Seed Sower.

A Magazine for the Church, the School, and the Home.

VOL. IX. NO. 4. JUNE, 1901. ONE PENNY.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
1. An Evening Hymn	49
2. The Drink Question. An Address. Rev. Joseph Wood...	49
3. The Case for a New Hymn Book. Rev. H. Gow	52
4. The Fate of the Chinese Girl	54
5. Channing's Symphony (illustrated). Rev. Frank K. Freeston	56
6. Notes on Sunday School Lessons. David Macrae	58
7. A Favourite Hymn and its Author. A. P. Putnam	59
8. The Neglect of Public Worship. C. A. Allen...	62
9. What the Years Bring. Poem. J. H. ...	63
10. News from the Field	63
11. The Children's Page	64

An Evening Hymn.

"The Lord's Name is praised from the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same."

1 The day Thou gavest, Lord, is ended,
The darkness falls at Thy behest;
To Thee our morning hymns ascended,
Thy praise shall sanctify our rest.

2 We thank Thee that Thy Church unsleeping,
While earth rolls onward into light,
Through all the world her watch is keeping,
And rests not now by day or night.

3 As o'er each continent and island
The dawn leads on another day,
The voice of prayer is never silent,
Nor dies the strain of praise away.

4 The sun that bids us rest is waking
Our brethren 'neath the western sky,
And hour by hour fresh lips are making
Thy wondrous doings heard on high.

5 So be it, Lord; Thy Throne shall never,
Like earth's proud empires, pass away;
Thy Kingdom stands and grows for ever,
Till all Thy creatures own Thy sway.

The Drink Question.

AN ADDRESS,

BY THE REV. JOSEPH WOOD.

One need not be a total abstainer to be keenly alive to the need and urgency of temperance reform and legislation. It is not necessary to stand on the platform of the United Kingdom Alliance to be keenly alive to the evils of our drinking habits, or to join in a crusade against that drunkenness which is one of the darkest blots on our civilisation. I give unstinted honour to those who, for the sake of others, pledge themselves to absolute self-denial in this matter; I wish them God-speed. But if any temperance legislation is to be carried it can only be by enlisting the sympathy and co-operation of that large mass of public opinion which is outside teetotalism, and yet would gladly support any wise measure of practical reform. Men see that to deal with the individual by inducing him to sign the pledge, while admirable in itself, does not touch the root of the evil. What is wanted is to strike at the causes of excessive drinking, and these will largely be found in social and economic directions. To deal with the individual is to deal with a result rather than a cause.

I am sick of the platitude that you cannot make people moral by Act of Parliament. No, but you can by bad laws, and by no laws at all, greatly increase immorality. You cannot legislate people into temperance; but you can by

legislation remove many of the causes of intemperance. Morals may not be a fit subject for legislation, but crime is. Show me a cause of crime and I will show you a fit subject for legislation. Now drink is often a cause of crime, and drinking, to an appalling extent, depends on facilities for drinking.

It is, however, more necessary just now to emphasise the fact that excessive drinking is a result as well as a cause. A great deal of exaggerated language has been used by philanthropists, judges of the land, and ardent prohibitionists on this subject. It is said that ninety per cent. of the crime and poverty of the country are due to drink. But men make the common mistake of thinking that the drink, which is often *associated* with crime and poverty, is therefore their cause. Does any sane man suppose that crime and poverty would diminish by ninety per cent. if England became sober to-morrow. Greed and falsehood, envy, anger and ambition, cruelty and lust, sweating and millionaireism would continue as before. There are sober countries, like Turkey and Norway, where yet crime and poverty abound. Excessive drinking often accompanies brutality, but it is not necessarily its cause. Excessive drinking arises from many causes—slum dwellings, foul air, impure water, want of pleasant and healthy interests, monotony of toil, ill-paid labour, labour under enervating and cruel conditions, ignorance, shame, the desire to forget, the craving for company, physical debility, poverty. I know it is said all these things are caused by drink; so they are, but only partly. Take poverty. Poverty is often a result of drinking, but drinking is not even the preponderating cause of poverty. The great mass of poverty is more largely an industrial disease than anything else, the result of economic forces and social conditions over which the individual worker has no control; and while intemperance is often found in intimate connection with poverty, it is because poverty flies to drink to drown its cares and wretchedness.

The Drink Bill.

One of the most startling facts in connection with the drink question is the enormous growth of the national drink bill. In 1872 the expenditure on drink for the United Kingdom was £131,600,000. In 1899 it had mounted up to £162,000,000—a steady increase of more than a million a year. Our yearly drink bill to-day means an expenditure of more than £4 a head for each man, woman, and child in our midst, and this notwithstanding a certain diminution in the actual number of public-houses. Our yearly drink bill is equal to all the rents of all the farms and houses in the country. We spend the whole rental of the country in drink. It is calculated by Messrs. Rowntree and Sherwell, whose book on the temperance problem is the most thorough and the most statesmanlike presentation of the subject it has yet received, that of the total drink bill £108,000,000 come from the pockets of the working classes. That is to say one-fifth of the total income of the weekly wage-earners goes in drink. For every pound received four shillings finds its way to the public-house. Yet the monetary waste is the least part of the evil. It is what the drink bill *connotes* which is so fearful. It is the attendant degradation of home and character, the broken hearts, the ruined lives, the tainted children, the deflowered womanhood, the brutalised manhood, the animal passions aroused, which must make every serious mind set itself to seek some remedy.

Remedies that Fail.

Messrs. Rowntree and Sherwell are themselves total abstainers and ardent temperance reformers. But they have the rare courage to be perfectly candid about various failures in temperance legislation. They are Local Optionists, but they point out from American experience that Local Option only succeeds where it is least wanted—in districts already sober—while it stands no chance of adoption in districts where drinking extensively prevails. They are Prohibitionists, but they acknowledge that Maine Liquor Laws everywhere break down in practice, and that there is no prohibitionist town in the United States where drink cannot be freely obtained. The law is grossly evaded, and the magistrates have frequently to deal with charges of drunkenness. You may enact a law, but you cannot enforce it in face of a large body of public sentiment opposed to it. Nor would the proposed system of High Licensing effect a cure, since while it might do away with a certain number of small drinking places it would only

make the larger ones more valuable. All this is not to say that minor remedies are of no avail. It would do much for temperance if we could secure (1) Sunday closing, (2) bringing mere drinking-clubs under the same regulations as public-houses, (3) limiting, according to population, the number of houses where drink can be obtained on the lines of Lord Peel's Minority Report, namely, one public-house for every 750 in towns, and one for each 400 in country districts, a regulation which would reduce the number of public-houses in the United Kingdom by one-half; and (4) prohibiting the sale of drink to children under sixteen years of age. With these four reforms we should doubtless see in a short time a considerable improvement; yet they only touch the fringe of the problem. What is wanted, our authors tell us, is some adaptation of the

SCANDINAVIAN SYSTEM,

by which liquor selling is taken entirely out of private hands for private profit, and transferred either to the local authority or to a public trust. When Mr. Chamberlain, many years ago, proposed that this should be done by way of experiment in and by Birmingham, it was opposed on the ground that as the profits would go to the municipality it would be to the interest of the authorities to sell as much as possible, and every local election would turn on questions connected with the regulations and facilities for drinking. It is on this ground that the Scandinavian system has been constantly opposed in this country by temperance reformers. Messrs. Rowntree and Sherwell's modification of the system does away with this objection. They propose that the local authority or public trust which buys up and manages the public-houses shall only profit to the extent of the current rate of interest on the capital invested, and that all profits beyond shall be paid over to a State Department, which shall devote one-half of such profits to the provision of those educational and recreative objects which directly counteract the temptation to drink. The profits are to be voted back to the various districts, not in the same proportion as received, but according to the population, so that in no case will the grant for educational and recreative purposes depend on the amount of sales in any particular town. Were the profits to go in reduction of the rates there would be a reason for pushing sales. The great thing is that it should be no one's interest, whether the individual or the corporation, to increase trade. The proposal is simply this: "Kill excessive drinking by devoting its profits to that which cuts at the root of excessive drinking."

For while the Drink question is largely an economic and industrial question, while it is bound up with problems of land, labour, capital, sweating, and competition, things upon which I cannot now even touch, it is also to a great extent an educational question, a recreative question, and, as our authors call it, an

"ENTERTAINMENT-OF-THE-PEOPLE"

question. Why do men go to the public-house? Quite as much for social intercourse and escape from wretched surroundings as for drink. The love of drink is a symptom only; it is not the disease. A man drinks not only because his brute nature is strong and craves the stimulus, but because he has no other stimulating resource, no other interests. The public-house is his club and drawing-room where he meets his friends and companions. His home is uncomfortable, his life is dull, his work is dreary and monotonous, and he needs some enjoyment. Now you will never grapple with the evils of drinking and its demoralising influences except by providing new opportunities for social intercourse and healthful recreation, cheerful, attractive, and ready to hand. It is this aspect of the question which appeals so largely to those who have intimate knowledge of the life of the poor. The publican finds his great opportunity in a severe lack in our public arrangements for the pleasures and recreations of the people.

Where can the labourer meet his friends and discuss the things in which he is interested? Is human nature in the West End different from human nature in the East End? Not at all. In both quarters man is a social being, desiring converse with his fellow creatures; in both alike his nature demands the alternation of work and play, strain and relaxation, of expenditure of effort and renewal of power—in a word, continual RE-CREATION is necessary to restore the elasticity of life. The difference is not in needs, but in the manner of satisfying them.

Go down into the poor quarters of any of our

great towns and what do you see? Dark grimy, narrow streets; foul, insanitary courts; slums, squalor, smells, cold, damp. The only places where men can meet their fellows in good light, genial warmth, perfect freedom, and with elbow-room—places made attractive by their glaring decorations, their company and their welcome, are the gin palaces.

The problem is to counteract all that by providing better, brighter, more attractive places of resort—without intoxicants.

If the profits of the Drink Traffic were paid over to a Government Department, and if that department paid one-half the total profits to the various cities, towns, and districts in proportion to their population, Birmingham's share would not be less than £50,000 a year. Under the new proposal, Birmingham must devote this large sum to educational and recreative purposes. It could build with the money a splendid people's palace every year, and maintain it in good order, until every quarter of the town had its rival to the public-house. Every such palace—and there might in time be twenty of them—would have its great and small concert rooms, its club rooms, chess rooms, billiard rooms, dancing rooms, smoke rooms, refreshment rooms, reading rooms, gymnasium, swimming bath; it would have its educational classes, scientific, literary, dramatic, handicraft and technical. It would further have in connection with it cricket and football grounds, and would in a thousand ways compete with the public-house for the company of the people.

Such is the scheme sketched out by Rowntree and Sherwell—the wisest and most statesman-like scheme ever put before the public for dealing with evils we all so deeply deplore.

It is the duty of everyone, of fathers and mothers, of citizens and neighbours, to take this great question to heart, to seek some remedy, to find some cure. The remedy is, after all, in your hands, you voters and electors in a free State. The waste of public money is in your hands. The health and happiness, the character and welfare of your children, the peace and comfort of your town, the friends you have given you, the generations yet unborn—all these are in your keeping, for "No man liveth to himself and no man dieth to himself."

Here in the crowded thoroughfares of our cities, as of old, in the solitude of the wilderness, the question is asked, "Where is thy brother?"

How shall we answer that question in the final account? Upon us is laid the burden of purifying the homes and uplifting the public life of our land. Ours is the duty of fighting against the ills of life, evil spirits which enslave men, and of bringing about a condition of things where the poor shall no longer be left in dull, besotted substitutes for rational recreation, nor tempted at every street corner to drown their cares in drink, or yield to the temptation because no other refuge or anodyne is open to them.

The Case for a New Hymn Book.

According to the Essex Hall Year Book, there are three hymn books which stand out from all others as the most popular in our English Free Christian Churches. These are (1) Dr. Martineau's original hymn book, called "Hymns for the Christian Church and Home;" (2) Dr. Martineau's late hymn book, called "Hymns of Praise and Prayer;" (3) the Essex Hall Hymnal. I find, by looking through the list of English churches, that Dr. Martineau's original hymn book is used in sixty-six of our churches. Curiously enough the later hymn book is used in sixty-six other churches. Ninety-nine churches use the Essex Hall Hymnal either alone or with another hymn book. Sixty-eight churches use other more or less local hymn books. The case for a new hymn book to be elited under the auspices of the National Conference rests on two grounds: (1) The inadequacy of the present books, and (2) the desirability of more union amongst our churches through the use of a common hymn book.

It is always unpleasant, having to speak of the inadequacy of old efforts, but since the need which many of us feel for a new hymn book implies that inadequacy, it is better to state openly the reasons for the feelings.

Amongst the many great services which Dr. Martineau beyond any other man in our community has rendered to us is to be reckoned the gift of his two hymn books. They are the best hymn books we have ever had. Many of us love his first hymn book as we shall never love

another. But we are simply refusing to face facts if we do not recognise that this first hymn book is inadequate. Dr. Martineau himself recognised it by publishing a new enlarged and altered edition, which is practically another hymn book. This second hymn book is, I think, the best collection of hymns we have; at the same time it seems to me to have weaknesses which will prevent its ever being generally adopted by our churches. Theoretically, I doubt if it is possible for any collection of hymns selected by one man to be suitable for permanent and general use in our churches. His philosophy, his taste, his beliefs, his personality cannot but influence him in his selection. He will have his own ideas about altering hymns, about omissions, and about melody. Half-a-dozen men, one in religious feeling, but diverse in doctrine and personality, are far more likely to produce a catholic collection of hymns. The personality of Dr. Martineau is markedly felt in his hymn books, and it is more obtrusive in the second than the first. In the first we feel the philosopher, the mystic, the seer. In the second, in addition to this, we feel the rationalistic critic. He has impressed himself upon this second book so strongly, that although it is a larger and better collection, it is less Catholic than the first. If Dr. Martineau's hymn books fail in something through this fact that they are one-man hymn books, it is quite evident that no other single man amongst us need attempt the task. We must look to a collection of men—and I would add women—if we are to expect a book which may be generally adopted in our churches.

The only other hymn book largely used is the Essex Hall Hymnal. That hymnal has been produced through the joint counsels of several ministers, but I do not imagine that its editors ever supposed it was an adequate collection for general use. They aimed to produce a cheap book for small churches: they wanted popular hymns, which could be sung to popular tunes. This aim they have achieved and with this end in view their work has been well done. It is in no spirit of rivalry that the idea of the new Hymn Book is urged. The aim of a Conference Hymn Book would be a larger and more comprehensive one. Its editor would provide and publish tunes which is surely a crying necessity; they would aim at a Catholic many-sided collections, and they would hope to bring our churches closer together through the use of a common book.

That it is desirable for closer union to exist amongst our churches few will be found to deny. There is a growing feeling amongst many of us that all of our congregations need to be brought into closer relationship with one another and to feel our unity. Some try for this by suggesting systems of government, some by suggesting systems of doctrine, some by suggesting common forms of worship. Such suggestions lead to endless argument, and cannot possibly be realised at present. But it is no wild and impossible ideal to hope for a hymn and tune book which may be so catholic, so representative of the best thought and feeling and piety amongst us that it may be gradually adopted by our churches as they need a change. The one association amongst us which is competent to produce such a book is the National Conference Committee. It represents all our Free Churches, our provincial assemblies, and our colleges. Its principles are the principles for which we have stood during the last two hundred years. A hymn book published under the auspices of the National Conference would appeal to our churches as no other hymn book could do. Further, it would be easy for the National Conference to find the money, and surely not very difficult to find the men. Let the Conference Committee appoint a representative sub-committee from its own members, with power to co-opt others whose help might be desired.* The editing of a hymn book in such a way would undoubtedly involve much work and some worry, but it would meet one of the most real needs of our churches, and would be the most practical means of bringing us into a somewhat closer relationship with each other.

H. Gow.

"To me," says Longellow, "a sermon is no sermon in which I cannot hear the heart beat."

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*[That which Mr. Gow pleads for is already on the way to accomplishment. At a meeting held in Oxford only a few weeks ago the National Conference Committee appointed a sub-committee to enquire and report on the advisability, cost, and principles of selection and arrangement of a new hymn book.—ED.]

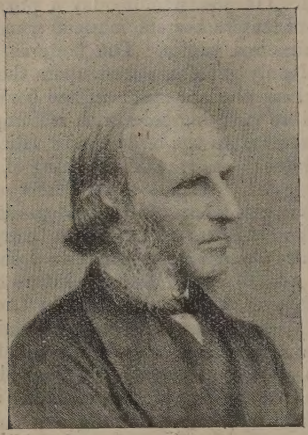
The Fate of the Chinese Girl.

The land of the Celestials is distinctly not a woman's kingdom. When a girl is born the entire community mourns the event. She does so herself as soon as she is old enough to realise it. In many provinces of Southern China new-born girls are dropped in a running stream. Not a few are buried alive, as such a disposition of them is supposed to insure the next child being a boy. Very shallow graves are made in which the little bodies are placed, but they are soon disinterred and devoured by hungry dogs. The less favoured sisters who are permitted to live, as a rule, sooner or later, "go to the dogs" by as direct, although a more unhappy, route. The law forbids infanticide, but the authorities do not actively interfere. A pool near Foo-Chow has on its banks a huge stone bearing the inscription: "It is forbidden to drown girls here." This is to abate a nuisance, not to prevent a crime. This state of affairs is the result of ancestral worship. When a girl marries, she worships only at the shrine of her husband's ancestors. A boy worships through life his own ancestors, and as affairs in "The Shadow Land" go sadly awry when the devotions to posterity cease, it is most desirable to keep up a line of succession. Poor people who do not destroy their infant daughters very frequently sell them, either as slaves or wives. Betrothal gifts being expensive, parents find it economical to buy girls and rear them as wives for their sons. They then have the advantage of their services. They may be purchased in infancy for about ten shillings. Girls from twelve to twenty years of age are valued from two to ten pounds. Such little girls as are deemed worthy of life are allowed five years in which to have measles, croup, smallpox, and other maladies of infancy, and to be generally comfortable. If they show a due appreciation of parental favour by surviving, the business of life must then commence for them with the binding of their feet. The Manchu and Hakka women do not bind the feet, but they are not considered pure Chinese. The Empress and the ladies of the Imperial harem are Manchus, and have feet of natural size. When the little maids are seven years old, they may no longer sit at table or on the same mat with their brothers. Frequently at this age, too, they are betrothed. From their tenth year they are not allowed to go out, and if their parents are wealthy, a widow is employed to teach them the code of etiquette. They must learn to embroider, to fashion their garments, to manage the silk cocoons, and the culinary department must receive a share of attention. Their education must include the preparation of the sacrifices and the etiquette of offerings before the gods. When they are fifteen years old, custom demands that their hair should be arranged with a silver ornament, to indicate that they have attained the marriageable age. As a finishing touch, a few ambitious damsels add the accomplishment of reading and writing, but in Northern China it is not considered at all essential, even with ladies of high rank. At twenty years of age all right-minded young women are supposed to marry, unless they are mourning the loss of a parent, in which case the ceremony is postponed until they are twenty-three. A Chinese maiden may not look upon the face of the husband chosen for her until her wedding day. If her betrothed is a near neighbour, a bribe to a servant may yield food for reflection. Should report picture a noble knight she may build air castles; but the reverse of such a portrait is possible. A girl's parents may not be unduly exacting, and if her future lord is maimed, halt, or blind, her day dreams are likely to turn into nightmares. Betrothals are solemn ceremonies. Parents who are seeking a wife for a son, place with a go-between a card on which is inscribed the family name of the aspirant for matrimony, the hour, the day, month and year of his birth, and his mother's maiden name. The reverse of the card is decorated with a dragon and a red silk cord is passed through it. The agent looks about for a young girl of suitable rank and fortune, and notifies the parents of the desired damsel. If they look with favour on the match, they give to an agent a card of information concerning their daughter's birth and family connections, which is decorated with a phœnix and a red cord. The matchmakers then consult the horoscopes of the young people. If either of them are born under an unlucky star, the match is no longer considered, for should an untoward accident occur in either family, such as the breaking of a porcelain dish or the loss of any article, it would be regarded as an unlucky omen. If, however,

the heavens smile upon them and affairs terrestrial roll smoothly, the cards are exchanged, are deposited upon the respective family altars, and it is announced that "the red strings are tied." The tying of the red strings is irrevocable. A young lady whose *fiancé* dies is said to have "spilled her tea." If she is a proper-minded young person, she at once proceeds to the late abode of her lover, places her tablet upon the altar of his ancestors and devotes her life to the service of his parents. Persistence in this conduct until the age of sixty-one is rewarded by a monument for commemoration of her virtue. Should the lady die before the wedding day, her tablet, fan, and handkerchief are placed in a bridal chair, and are conveyed to the residence of the groom elect. The tablet is placed upon the altar, wedding ceremonies are celebrated, and the mythical bride is thus duly installed in the spirit world as a married woman. After these attentions the demi-husband dries his tears and takes unto himself a more material wife aa soon as possible. There are few pretty Chinese girls. They paint their faces a dead white, and apply rouge to lips and cheeks, and with a charred stick trace eyebrows to resemble the willow leaf or the new moon. Their hair is plastered most unbecomingly with bandoline, and flowers are freely used in decoration. They wear neither hats, bonnets, nor gloves. Earrings, bracelets, and finger rings are worn as amulets. They can, however, boast of very small and extremely pretty hands. The bridal trousseau of a gentlewoman is truly magnificent. The shoes are a very important item in her eyes. Those for the important event are made of rose-pink satin, embroidered with shaded blue silks intermingled with gold. Small gaiters of sea-green silk, tied with red ribbons finished with tassels, are worn around the ankles. The skirt of the bridal robe is of scarlet cloth elaborately embroidered with shaded blue silk. The overdress is a combination of crimson brocaded crape and white satin, embroidered in blue and gold. Over the head, and completely concealing the face, a veil of scarlet crape is thrown; this is surmounted by a crown of pearl ornaments. Either the spring season or the last month of the year is considered the most propitious for a wedding. The fortnight prior to it is passed by the bride-elect in loud lamentations, in which cheerful pastime she is joined by the entire household. When they have done justice to their feelings the trousseau is sifted to secure the destruction of all evil influences that might accompany it to the new home. Each article is placed separately in a sieve, which is passed over a pan of burning charcoal. On the wedding-day a procession is formed of lantern bearers, musicians, and coolies, all wearing red tunics. The lanterns have the bride's family name inscribed upon them. The coolies bear the trousseau in red boxes, which are tied to carrying poles with red crape. The "new woman," as the bride is now called, seated in a red sedan chair, amid the firing of crackers is borne away. At the same time a procession leaves the residence of the bridegroom; when the lantern bearers meet, those carrying the bridegroom's name take places in front of the chair. At the threshold of her future home she is lifted over burning charcoal by two "lucky women." Her lord awaits her on a raised dais, and she humbly makes her k'o-t'ou before him. Then a wedding ceremony takes place, the principal feature of which is a tumult sufficient to awaken ancestors who have been dead for countless ages. In the midst of this unearthly din the bridal couple k'o-t'ou before the family altar, and worship heaven, earth, and the bridegroom's ancestors. The bride's deceased relatives are conspicuously neglected. The bride is then conducted to the apartment of her mother-in-law, her veil is removed, and for the first time the newly-wedded pair gaze upon each other's faces. This is apt to be a bad quarter of an hour for the bride. Chinese etiquette does not prevent a candid expression of her consort's opinion concerning her personal attractions. If she has large feet he feels justified in returning her to her parents. Following his critical review, the friends of the family are invited to pass judgment, which they proceed to do with cheerful frankness. It is a rare chance for spiteful crones to wound the vanity of a pretty girl; to a homely one they are merciless. The bride bides her time—there will be brides and brides in her day. When the question of her fitness for the new position is settled the bride is permitted to serve her parents-in-law at the feast that ends the festivites, after which she has the privilege of sitting at table with her husband and seeing him eat dainties which good form

forbids her to touch. Thus the duties of her new life are assumed and her girlhood days ended.

Channing's Symphony.



WILLIAM HENRY CHANNING.

The preciousness of life—in what does it consist? It is admitted by all of us, but it is appraised at such varying values, and realised for such different reasons. Life is short: let us get what we can out of it, ere it be too late. Life is pleasant: let us enjoy it to the top of our bent. Life is a lottery: let us play high, and win or die. Life is opportunity: let us seize our chances, ere they pass by. Life is duty, work—here we strike a deeper note—let us do it: it is struggle and conflict, let us strive and achieve,—for others, for progress, and in the struggle find zest and interest, and out of the struggle gain peace. Yes, there is an inward satisfaction, which does not touch the true preciousness until it has gone deeper than passing chance, or surface happiness. And we usually account for it, when we know it or see it, as due to the absence of certain defects or hindrances, the presence of certain excellencies or advantages in a man's environment, temperament, habit of thought, or course of conduct. Hence the moralist and the pulpit, when dealing with life, single out this or that virtue or defect for special and separate treatment, upholding the one or rebuking the other as precious or adverse to life's highest happiness. So that, like Benjamin Franklin, we come to think of life as consisting of one part at a time, which may be singled out for due correction and discipline, and when each one has been subjected in turn to this training, we shall have made some approximation to moral perfection.

But does the preciousness of life really lie in that direction? It rather depends, it seems to me, not so much upon the excellency of each instrument, but on the *harmony* of their united effect; not so much upon the intensity of each separate expression, but on the *symphony* of the whole man; not so much upon the perfection of each stone, but rather upon the *symmetry* of the building. Of course the more perfect each part, the more perfect the machine: but then, life is not a machine, and cannot be taken to pieces and inspected like a machine. Perfection, satisfaction, will not come through the ethical circumspection of each motive or action, but through the spontaneous rising of the whole nature to some great uniting desire. We do not, cannot, separate off our nature into compartments as it were, although we use terms which seem to imply this power; but, in reality, all our faculties act together, rise or fall together, help each other, need each other. There is a solidarity of the self, as there is of the race. Whole conceptions and considerations are always truer than partial ones. Gaps, chasms, discords, prejudices, whether in our own lives or that of society, are due to sectional interests over-riding and usurping the general weal. In the chariot of life some of the steeds are steady, some restless; the art of life lies in driving them all abreast. If we ring the changes of a varying experience, we have to learn to yet ring in tune. Those lives come closest into touch with life's preciousness which form for themselves—not plans, or schemes, or partial ideas, but which follow a unifying aim, a comprehending conception, which turn the broken music of life into melody, its contrasted movements into a

life symphony, its related parts into a total effect, like the perfect agreement of a Joachim quartet.

There are not many, perhaps, who have reduced their life symphony into words, yet

> "Who carry music in their heart
> Through dusky lane and wrangling mart;
> Plying their daily task with busier feet,
> Because their secret souls a holy strain repeat."

But I would put before you one which I think is worth our hearing, partly as an illustration of what I mean, chiefly for itself alone. It runs as follows:—

"To live content with small means: to seek elegance rather than luxury, and refinement rather than fashion; to be worthy, not respectable, and wealthy, not rich; to listen to stars and birds, babes and sages, with open heart; to study hard, to think quietly, act frankly, talk gently, await occasions, hurry never; in a word, to let the spiritual, unbidden and unconscious, grow up through the common—this is my symphony."

And it is a symphony—that is the first thing to say—a concerted idea which covers all will and desire, a spiritual aim which colours the whole disposition—not parts of it alone. We know at once from the mere score of this setting, that, if sung as written, it will reveal the soul of a noble and somewhat unusual man. I say "unusual," for characters change their types with changing times. We have been shown quite recently "the good man of the 18th century" and have marked how he differs from the good man of, to-day. And these changes are not always for the best. Do we realise, exclaims Ian Maclaren, how poorly we sometimes show beside the type of former days? "Benevolence, uprightness, enterprise, intellectual honesty, a love of freedom, and a hatred of superstition, are growing around us, but we look in vain for that most beautiful character of the past, so distrustful of self, so trustful of others, so simple, so modest, so devout, which even when it bestowed its affections on a cloud, made its very illusions the source of some of the purest virtues of our nature."

But the aggressive, assertive, competitive type is not the one revealed in the symphony of life. Rather is it the simple, modest, and devout; the contemplative, the reverent, the poetic; the spiritual, the Christ-like. I do not propose that we should discuss the *pros* and *cons* of each separate theme in this symphony. It is, speaking generally, the revival of the plea for "plain living and high thinking," for a return to simplicity. It is a gracious content with less than might be snatched from the world of material things by fierce struggle and hot success, if only the inner spiritual possessions may take their place. It is a wish to turn all money to "means"—*i.e.*, means of goodness, service, elegance, and the refinements of life,—the true riches, rather than be ensnared by the mere money mania, or the ostentatious luxuries of excess, or the vanities and fashions of display and waste.

It is a desire, further, for true culture—for the learning that comes from attentive listening, for the quiet reflection that turns knowledge into wisdom, for the receptive disposition of children in whom, like Wordsworth and Froebel, we see the hidden angel, for the spirit of adoration which stands under the stars and hears the mighty music of the spheres. Listening, hearing, seeing, *then speaking*—with open ear, and eye, and heart—all culture goes back to that. "The greatest thing a human soul ever does in this world," said Ruskin, "is to see something, and tell what it saw in a plain way. Hundreds of people can talk, for one who can think. But thousands can think for one who can see. To see clearly is poetry, prophecy, and religion all in one."

Therefore, continues our symphony, think quietly, with hard study, and then "act frankly and talk gently." Of all the minor virtues, the most engaging is *frankness*, but few of us practice it with open face: of all the ordinary habits of intercourse the most precious is *gentleness*, but few of us pay it full deference. Boisterous ways and blustering words—which seem force, but are weakness,—how often they lay us open to the rebuke—

> "Your gentleness shall force
> More than your force moves us to gentleness."

And we, brought low in humility, reply—

> "Let gentleness my strong enforcement be."

For gentleness is but controlled strength, and with perfect frankness as its ally the wheels of life run sweetly and truly.

Then we lose the sense of hurry, and await occasions quietly. Then our work puts on tranquillity, and our effort can continue patiently, until it reaches its right opportunity. The great French painter, Millet, described his career as ten years of daubing, ten years of drudgery, ten years of despair,—and then at last ten years of success. Art is long, and time is fleeting, but "hurry never" is a wise caution. It is the secret of strong growth, of sound work, of harmonious purpose, of serene confidence.

All these things, although so simple in themselves, go to the making of character and life, and contribute each their part to the general note that tunes all details into a harmonious whole. Out of the common and material there grows up thus, unbidden and unconscious, the uncommon and the spiritual. Out of the undefined and undefinable, the casual and seemingly trivial, there arises a spiritual glow in the soul that makes it ample, and fertile, and fit to be immortal. Out of a mind attuned like this emerges the mind of Christ. Out of the life which is music on earth rises the life which is hid with Christ in God. "Wouldest thou be made whole?"—thou who are suffering from life's infirmities—look up to the Christ life—"arise, take up thy bed and walk." All our partial ideals, and sectional aims, and trivial desires may be, *must* be, symphonised into one whole and harmonious life like his.

So much for Channing's symphony—for you know it is he, not the famous preacher, but his nephew, a no less beautiful character, and remembered by many here, for he was the first to conduct free services like ours in this Kensington parish. It was easy for him, with his emotion and imagination, to string together, you may say, this symphony. Did he live it out actually? If his biographer is to be believed, he did, and *nobly*. If those who knew him intimately, and differed from him widely, are to be believed, he did. "A most delightful man, full of the right spirit, of remarkable beauty of character," said Theodore Parker; "full of good tendencies, of noblest aspirations; an eye to see the evils of society, a heart to feel them, a soul to hope better things; a willingness to endure all self-denial to accomplish the end whereto he was sent; not covered with thickest wrappages which rather obscure his worthy uncle."

"Never was there a spirit more prepared for the higher life," said Dr. Martineau. "I received his parting kiss as a consecration, sweetening and calming the remainder of my time." "The *holiest* person I ever knew," said Dr. Freeman Clarke. He was, like Robertson of Brighton, a high-spirited, chivalrous man, with all the pride of a gentleman, and all the scorn of consequence of a fearless champion against wrong; intense and spontaneous in his emotion, finely strung in his spiritual passion, yet free from exaggeration or overstrain, affluent and alert, yet not erratic, extraordinarily frank, yet not blunt. He dwelt in a land of far distances, loved wide views from high places, studied the skies and the stars, revelled in sunlight and space. Somewhat unpractical, he was exultantly spiritual, in all things, and on all occasions, beholding and obeying the divine will. His symphony was a life reality. It was composed of all precious things; it was a harmony of existence. It is an incentive to each of us to be as one

> Who hath among least thing
> An undersense of greatness; sees the parts
> As parts, but with a feeling of the whole.

FRANK K. FREESTON.

Notes on Sunday School Lessons.

BY DAVID MACRAE.

CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST.

With love the Saviour's heart o'erflowed,
Love spake in every breath,
Supreme it reigned throughout his life,
And triumphed in his death.

1. *When we speak of the Cross, to what event does the expression point?* It points back to the death of Christ, who, more than 1800 years ago, died on the Cross at Calvary.—Mark xv. 12-37; Luke xxiii. 33-48.

2. *How has the Cross become so identified with Christianity?* Because it brings out the spirit of Christ and of the religion He taught; and it marks out the pathway to Heavenly life.—1 Cor. i. 23; 1 Cor. ii, 2.

3. *How does it bring out the spirit of Christ's life?* Because His whole life was a life of self-surrender to God for us; and His death on the Cross was the supreme proof of His self-surrender.—Rom. v. 7, 8; John iv. 34; Rom. xv. 1-3; 2 Cor. v. 14-21; 2 Cor. viii. 9; Heb. xii. 2-4.

4. *How does the Cross bring out the spirit of Christianity?* Because the spirit of Christianity is love to God and love to man; and this is the spirit which Christ and His Cross represents.—Matt. xxii. 37-40; John xiii. 13-17; John xv. 12; Rom. xiii. 8-10; Gal. v. 22; Eph. v. 1, 2; 1 John iv. 20, 21; 1 Thess. iii. 12, 13; 1 Tim. i. 5; 1 Peter iii. 8, 9.

5. *How does the Cross reveal the pathway to heavenly life?* Because heavenly life is the life of love, the life of unselfishness, the life of perfect self-surrender to the will of God; and this is the spirit of the Cross.—John v. 25, 26; 1 Cor. xiii. 4-8 and 13; Phil. ii. 12, 13; 1 Pet. iii. 22; 1 John iii. 14; Matt. v. 43-48; Matt. x. 42; Matt. xxv. 31-40.

6. *Is this self-surrender an easy thing?* No; it involves suffering, self-denial, and struggle—the painful crucifixion of self-will.—Rom. vii. 22-24; Prov. xvi. 32; Matt. xxvi. 41; Jas. i. 12.

7. *Did Christ reach the perfect life in this way?* Yes; we are told that He was made perfect through suffering.—Heb. v. 8, 9; Heb. xii. 2; Matt. xxvi. 36-42.

8. *Has each one to take up the same Cross?* Yes; Jesus said, "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his Cross daily;" and again, "Whosever doth not bear his cross, and come after Me, cannot be my disciple."—Luke xiv. 27; Mark viii. 34-36; Mark x. 21; Luke ix. 23, 24; 1 John iii. 16.

9. *What does Paul say about himself?* "Crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live: yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."—Gal. ii. 20; Gal. v. 24; Gal. vi. 14.

10. *What does this Cross-bearing bring at last?* The peace of God and the crown of heavenly life and heavenly power.—James i. 12; John xiv. 27; Rom. xiv. 17; Rom. viii. 6; Rom. vi. 4, 13; 1 Cor. ix. 25; Rev. ii. 10 (last clause); Rev. vii. 13-17; Matt. v. 3, 6, 10; 2 Tim. iv. 8.

SALVATION THROUGH THE CRUCIFIXION OF SELFISHNESS.

"The mystery, dimly understood,
That love of God is love of good,
And chiefly its divinest trace
In Him of Nazareth's holy face;
That to be saved is only this
Salvation from our selfishness,
From more than elemental fire—
The soul's unsanctified desire;
From sin itself, and not the pain
That warns us of its chafing chain;
That worship's deeper meaning lies
In mercy and not sacrifice:
Not proud humilities of sense,
And posturing of penitence,
But love's unforced obedience."—WHITTIER.

A Favourite Hymn and its Author.

Quite wonderful, sometimes, is the growing and gracious power of a good hymn, which, perhaps, had a very humble and almost unknown origin. It reminds us of some new star that comes in sight to the wistful astronomer and ere long finds its acknowledged place in the planetary system with orbs "for ever singing as they shine." So, ever and anon, some new and beautiful song of prayer or praise appears to view, seen at first, it may be, by only a few at most, but destined soon to wider recognition, until finally it is claimed as properly belonging to the great harmonious whole, and henceforth with the rest perpetuates ceaselessly its vast and sacred ministry. In not a few of our later hymn books there is one of these favourite songs of which I wish to give here some account. Like many other clergymen, no doubt, I have often given it out to be sung in the church or at funerals for comfort to sad or bereaved souls, and have found scarcely any other so well fitted to afford the needed consolation. One might wish it could always be sung to the tune of *Henley*, as arranged in the "Hymn and Tune Book," published by the American Unitarian Association, in 1868. However familiar the lines may be to the reader, let me quote them here, as they are printed there:

"Come unto me when shadows darkly gather,
When the sad heart is weary and distrest,
Seeking for comfort from your Heavenly Father;
Come unto me, and I will give you rest.

Ye who have mourned when the spring-flowers were taken,
When the ripe fruit fell richly to the ground;
When the loved slept, in brighter homes to waken,
Where their pale brows with spirit-wreaths are crowned.

Large are the mansions in thy Father's dwelling,
Glad are the homes that sorrows never dim;
Sweet are the harps in holy music swelling,
Soft are the tones which raise the heavenly hymn.

There, like an Eden blossoming in gladness,
Bloom the fair flowers the earth too rudely pressed;
Come unto me, all ye who droop in sadness,
Come unto me, and I will give you rest."

So far as I know, the first church collection in which these lines appeared was the "Book

of Hymns," compiled by Rev. Samuel Longfellow and Rev. Samuel Johnson, and published forty years ago. The hymn was omitted in their "Hymns of the Spirit," 1864. It was adopted by Rev. James Freeman Clarke, in the present "Disciples' Hymn Book," which was founded on his earlier work of 1844. We find it in Mr. Hepworth's "Songs of the Unity," 1859, and also in the "Methodist Hymnal," 1878. In these and other collections it appears as "*Anonymous*." Dr. Martineau introduced it into his later compilation, "Hymns of Praise and Prayer," 1874, and refers it to the "Book of Hymns" above mentioned. He had sought to ascertain the name of the author, and the inquiry was made of friends in America as well as England. The desired information was received too late for the first edition of his new hymn book. No one seemed to know who the writer was. An item was inserted in the *Christian Register* asking any reader of that paper, who might be able to give the name, to send it to the editor. A Medford correspondent, "M. L. R.," under date of July 12, 1874, stated that the hymn was a part of one that had been published in 1839, in an *Annual* entitled "The Christian Keepsake," and that it was composed by Miss Catharine H. Waterman, of Philadelphia. Accordingly, when the Association issued, in 1877, the revised edition of its "Hymn and Tune Book," the hymn reappeared with this name of the author. "M. L. R." had in hand an old copy of the *Annual* referred to, and offered to send it to the *Register* if desired. In the issue of July 25, 1874, the whole of the original poem was published, and it is again reproduced here, since many who are familiar with the portion of it which was adapted to use in the Sanctuary, may not then have seen it in its early and entire form, as it was printed in the *Register*, but may like to see it now.

"Come unto me, ye who are heavy laden,"
Come unto me, ye who are sore opprest;
The white-haired sire, the young and tender maiden—
"Come unto me, and I will give you rest."

Ye who have seen the clouds of tempest cover
All that the earth had promised fair and bright;
Ye who have seen death's pinions darkly hover,
Quenching the life that was a joy and light:

Come unto me, though shadows round you gather,
Though the sad heart is weary and distrest;
Then ask for comfort from a Heavenly Father—
"Come unto me, and I will give you rest."

Ye who are mourning o'er the young and cherished,
Ye who have laid the lovely in the earth;
Ye who have wept when the young infant perished,
Ere it had lisped its little words of mirth:

Come unto me, and see its wings of brightness,
The fading flower that withered on thy breast,
Thou shalt receive it in its robe of whiteness—
"Come unto me, and I will give you rest."

Ye who have mourned when autumn leaves were taken,
When the ripe fruit fell richly to the ground;
When the old slept, in brighter homes to waken,
Where their pale brows with glory-wreaths were crowned;

Ye who have sighed for kindred voice to bless you,
Ye who so oft its gentle tones have blest,
Come where in peace they shall again caress you—
"Come unto me, and I will give you rest."

Large are the mansions in yon heavenly dwelling,
Glad are the homes no sorrows ever dim,
Sweet are the harps in holy music swelling,
Soft are the tones that raise the heavenly hymn.

There like an Eden, blossoming in gladness,
Bloom the fair flowers the earth too rudely prest;
Then hither haste, all ye who mourn in sadness;
"Come unto me, and I will give you rest."

Who it was that, entering into the spirit of these verses, thought and saw how with slight alterations and adaptations a beautiful and noble hymn could be taken from them for wide and permanent use in public worship, and actually rendered the service for us,—I do not know, but presume it may have been Mr. Longfellow or Mr. Johnson. Perhaps some reader of *The Unitarian* can tell us.

But who was Catharine H. Waterman, who had thus written so long before? While engaged in certain hymnological researches some years since, I was curious to learn who she was and whether she was still living, for I felt that one who has breathed such a song of the spirit as that, must needs have contributed other offerings of a like nature. But no one, of whom I inquired, could tell me what I wanted to know. I had not, to my recollection, seen the name before, and it was not in any of the indexes of authors that were at my command. Thinking that the name might possibly have undergone a change and

so found its way into some volume of selections under a new form, I was one day looking more carefully through certain books of this kind, when my eye fell upon this, in Griswold's "Female Poets of America:"—

"CATHERINE H. ESLING.

Miss Catherine H. Waterman was born in Philadelphia, in 1812, and under her maiden name she became known as an author by many graceful and tender effusions in the periodicals. In 1840 she was married to Mr. Esling, a shipmaster of her native city."

I at once wrote to Dr. Furness about the matter, and with his accustomed interest and helpfulness in all good things, he immediately sought out the Esling family and soon wrote to me, Jan. 31, 1881: "I have had the pleasure of seeing Mrs. Esling this morning. She is a plain, cordial woman, somewhere near seventy; an Episcopalian by birth, but loving, she was pleased to say, and I was pleased to hear her, to visit my church. She has long given up writing. Her hymns never would have been published but for her mother. She promised to hunt up and send me some other hymns of hers. She did not know how fond we are of *that* hymn. She accepted my change of one word, *victory*, for "spirit wreaths," which smacks of spiritualism. She lives some three miles from me, more or less, in a house of one of those snug, two storied blocks which are the pride of our city, —very small, but neat and comfortable. I gather she lives with her daughter. She spoke of a son in the west. I thank you for putting me upon hunting Mrs. E. up. She loaned me a volume of her verses published here thirty years ago, now out of print:— 'The Broken Bracelet, and Other Poems,' all breathing a refined spirit, some quite touching."

In my mousing about in the New York book-stores after various rare, or out-of-the-way, treasures, I failed to find a copy of Mrs. Esling's poems, but one day, while I was on a visit at Philadelphia, I was more successful. I had not time to go the three miles out from the heart of the city and call upon her as I would have liked to do, but I inquired at several places after her book, and was on the point of giving up the search when I came across a shop that seemed well stocked in old, second-hand literature, and that really had one only copy on its shelves. "Now out of print," indeed,—I thought.

All that Griswold or Dr. Furness had remarked of her verses, it is unnecessary to say, was seen to be just and true. Written in her earlier life, many of them doubtless while she was a young lady, they are full of sentiment and feeling, and bespeak a heart full of affection, a passionate love of nature, and a spirit of pure and simple trust. None of them are remarkable, but all of them reveal an easy, happy faculty for versification, and are inspired with true and tender thought, while many of them, like the hymn, "Come unto me," have not a little real inspiration and beauty. A sad or pensive strain runs through a considerable number of them, as if the writer had already tasted the deeper sorrows of life. Such lines as these, taken from a poem entitled, "The Mother's Prayer for her Dead Babe," seem to have been written out of the agony of one who herself had suffered the loss she describes:

"Father of light, I lay
Before thy mighty throne this pulseless thing;
This precious piece of clay
In humbleness of heart to thee I bring!

* * * * *

Thou, whose high throne of grace
Is raised above the burning stars at night,
Whose glories we may trace
Through every rolling planet's living light;

Who lookest from on high
Into bereaved hearts; whose gracious ear
Hath heard the raven's cry,
List to a mother's prayer—in mercy hear!

* * * * *

Father, within thy hand
Is immortality, and endless joy!
Take to thine angel-band,
My heart's pure cherub, my young bright-haired boy.

Give to my baby, wings,
Give him the vestments of thy grace, O God!
Into thy breast he springs—
Hold, hold my aching heart, I kiss thy rod."

Here is a sweet little song which will find an echo in many a heart, for many a man and woman must have had the writer's own experience. It is itself entitled, "That Little Song."

"Sing me again that little song,
Oh! sing it once again!
A thousand buried memories rise
Before its simple strain.

I heard it when a happy child,
Amid a merry throng,
From gleesome voices long since hushed—
Oh! sing that little song!

I see again the bright green sward,
Whereon we gladly played,
I hear again the echoing sound
Their little footsteps made.

Their voices, like a ringing shell,
Are murmuring in mine ears,
And not a single eye is dim
With sorrow or with tears.

Hither they come, the rose-lipped ones,
In many a sister pair,
While the rich music of their hearts
Swells out upon the air.

Oh! through the long, long lapse of years,
They greet me once again,
Those young companions of my mirth,
Waked by that simple strain.

Heed not the tears within mine eyes,
While the quick memories throng
Of other days upon my heart:
Oh! sing that little song!"

The longer poems are "The Broken Bracelet," "Edith; or, Woman's Trials," "Flowers," etc. And here is the hymn, "Come unto me," in the same form in which "M. L. R." copied it for the *Register* from the *Annual*, except that the line in the later volume, "Many are the mansions in yon bright dwelling," appears in the earlier more happily, "Large are the mansions in yon heavenly dwelling."

It is seen that the compound word to which Doctor Furness took exception, "Spirit-wreaths," was not in the original. In the copy from the *Annual*, and here in the volume of poems, it is "glory-wreaths," which seems to me better than the word which Dr. Furness suggested, or than that which was substituted evidently by the compiler, who adopted the hymn for church use, and which "smacked of spiritualism."

A. P. PUTNAM.

Says Archbishop Whateley: "If our religion is not true we are bound to change it; if it is true we are bound to propagate it."

The Neglect of Public Worship.

What can be the reason why many good people to-day are indifferent to public worship? Must it not be that they are more or less lacking in religious feeling? They may be bright, strong-brained, keen-witted, honest, too, and kind-hearted, perhaps even public-spirited and patriotic; but the distinctive sympathies and aspirations that constitute the religious life have been somehow so neglected that they are seldom or never felt. The life of Charles Darwin, the famous naturalist, is an instance of this one-sided growth. He was a man of many admirable traits, but was so absorbed in scientific studies through his early years that he neglected everything connected with art and with religion. He grew up "atrophied" in these departments of human life, precisely as a man would be in his arms and fingers if from boyhood these had been so bandaged and tied up that he could not use them. He took no interest in music or pictures, because his perception of beauty was undeveloped: and he felt no attraction to anything religious because his religious nature was undeveloped In later life he confessed that this had been a great mistake,—that he was not so much of a man as he would have been if he had not allowed these highest parts of his nature to be atrophied. He was blind to beauty and to religion, precisely as a man would be blind to all the colour and grandeur and loveliness of the visible world, who had always kept his eyes so bandaged that they lost the power of vision, like the rudiments of eyes in the blind fish of the Mammoth Cave.

It is true that some people are naturally not so religious as others. But is this a reason for doing nothing to develop their religious instincts? If a boy cares very little for his studies, should we not insist that he must try to make up for his natural deficiency by more resolute effort? If a child is naturally delicate in health, should we shut him off from all kinds of exercise? Should we not rather see that he has ample exercise adapted to his needs, so that he may perhaps grow up to be as robust as most men? And so, if either old or young have never been trained religiously, and perhaps have become atrophied in soul, is this a reason why they should neglect everything religious? Is not the

mistake of many good people to-day, intellectually bright and socially interesting, and personally blameless except with regard to their religious duties, who frankly say, "I am not religious by nature, and therefore I do not care to go to church,"—is not this precisely the mistake that a man would make, who had sat so long at a desk as to have weakened his legs and lungs and digestion with a risk of fatal illness, and should then plead his feebleness as a reason for taking no exercise at all, but letting himself gradually sink into a hopeless invalidism? And could his friends do a greater kindness to such a man than to give him a thorough shaking-up day after day, despite his protests, until he began to really enjoy taking exercise and felt an interest in recovering his health?

C. A. ALLEN.

What the Years Bring.

Two sunny-haired and clear-voiced children stood
Among the flowers all careless; sunshine played
About their golden heads; and in the wood
The birds rejoiced, and pleasant music made.
Ah! Life's fresh morning is so gay and sweet,
They cared not for the flowers beneath their feet.

A youth and maiden in the summer noon
Wandered, and looked into each other's eyes,
And thought that Love was such a priceless boon,
That having it, no little cloud could rise
Upon their sky—so radiant, when we love,
Grows earth around us, and the sky above.

Two happy lives, close welded into one;
Bright children playing round them, and the light
Of Love and Home, like to the blessed sun
Shining about them, while the calm years' flight
Brings only happiness, for Home and Love
Are dear as heaven and the saints above.

One widowed heart, whose life-pulse beats alone;
Children all fatherless, and hope all fled.
What matter that she makes such bitter moan,
Or shrouds in fruitless woe her golden head?
The world goes by, all careless of her woe;
Cold world, which ever treats our sorrows so!

A grave, where tender maidens come to weep,
Bringing fresh garlands, when the old are dead.
What matters it? Their love breaks not the sleep
Of the quiet ears which hear no more their tread.
Such are our little lives; but heaven is ours,
When faded are our hopes, our loves and flowers.

J. H.

News from the Field.

WOLVERHAMPTON.—An interesting meeting was held on Monday, May 20th, to welcome the Rev. J. B. Higham, B.A. The chair was taken by Mr. Perry, and among others the Revs. L. P. Jacks, A. A. Charlesworth, Denby Agate, and J. C. Street took part. We trust that the settlement of Mr. Higham means the beginning of a new and brighter chapter for the Wolverhampton church.

DUDLEY.—The Rev. A. H. Shelley has announced his intention to resign the pulpit of the Old Meeting on or before March 25th, 1902.

MACCLESFIELD.—The Rev. A. L. Smith has resigned.

TAMWORTH.—The Rev. J. Howard will terminate his ministry here at the end of June.

WESTERN UNION.—The annual meetings were held at Bridgewater, on Thursday, May 2nd, and were well attended. A special feature of these meetings was the Christian brotherliness displayed by friends of other denominations. The Congregational minister, the Rev. J. Hirst, not only lent his schoolroom, but gave a capital speech. At the luncheon, Mr. Alderman T. Good presided, and grace was said by the Rev. J. Wilson, of the Methodist Free Church. These are only natural courtesies between men and churches, but they are so rare that when they occur they deserve to be recorded. The report of the committee revealed a hopeful spirit. It is proposed to raise a twentieth century fund of £1000 for the work of the Union. Mr. Broadrick, our minister at Bridgewater, and the agent of the Union, is doing splendid work among the western churches. At the evening meeting, presided over by the Rev. H. Solly, addresses were given by the Revs. W. C. Bowie, J. C. Odgers, J. McDowell, and J. Birks. Altogether a pleasant and successful set of meetings.

MALTON.—The Rev. W. Rodger Smyth has accepted an invitation to the pulpit of the Wheelgate Chapel and enters on his duties in June.

SOUTH CHESHIRE DISTRICT ASSOCIATION AND SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION. — The eleventh annual meetings took place at Shrewsbury on Wednesday, May 8th. Satisfactory reports were presented and officers were elected for the ensuing year. After tea a service was conducted in the chapel, when the Rev. W. E. Lummis, M.A., preached an able sermon.

SUNDAY SCHOOL ANNIVERSARIES are so numerous at this time of the year that it is impossible even to mention them at all by name. May they flourish greatly and their collections grow from more to more.

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THE CHILDREN'S PAGE.

A Mystery.

Flowers from clods of clay and mud!
Flowers so bright, and grass so green!
Tell me blade, and leaf, and bud,
How it is you're all so clean.

If my fingers touch these sods,
See, they're streaked with sticky earth;
Yet you spring from clayey clods,
Pure, and fresh, and fair from birth.

Do you wash yourselves at night
In a bath of diamond dew,
That you look so fresh and bright
When the morning dawns on you?

God perhaps sends summer showers,
When the grass cries out for rain,
To wash the faces of His flowers,
And bid His fields be green again.

Tell me blade, and leaf, and bud,
Flowers so fair, and grass so green,
Growing out of clay and mud,
How it is you're all so clean.

G. SETOUN.

Bartholomew.

Bartholomew
Is very sweet
From sandy hair
To rosy feet.

Bartholomew
Is six months old,
And dearer far
Than pearls or gold.

Bartholomew
Has deep blue eyes,
Round pearls dropped
From out the skies.

Bartholomew
Is hugged and kissed!
He loves a flower
In either fist.

Bartholomew's
My saucy son;
No mother has
A sweeter one.

NORMAN GALE.

Our Children.

We learned from our wistful mothers
To call Old England "home."—*Kipling.*

"Mother, the spring is coming!
Down by the vlei-side now
You can see the green on the willow,
The gold on the wattle-bough;
You can watch the cups on the blue-gums
Swinging against the sky;
By-and-by they will scatter
Their sweet white tufts from high.

"The aloes are out on the kopjes,
The 'soldiers' yellow and red,
And between the dry thorn-bushes
The veldt-lily shows its head.
Mother, the spring is lovely!
See, we found in our roam
Cotton-pods, green and silky—
Is it just as lovely at home?"

"Children," the mother answers
(And her eyes see across the years),
"At home the sweet spring country
Is green with April's tears.
There are daffodils in the meadows,
There are violets in the lane;
The cuckoo calls thro' the orchards
'Midst blossoms that fall like rain.

"The bluebells swing in the breezes,
The cowslip scents the air,
The primrose and the foxglove
Make every hedgerow fair.
At home the happy children,
All thro' the sweet spring day,
Weave garlands for their crowning
In ever-changing play."

"We do not know of the cuckoo,"
Our children make reply;
"But we see the great asvogels
Apoise in the cloudless sky.
We cannot gather the primrose,
Nor cowslip garlands wear;
But our golden melon-blossoms—
Have they flowers at home so fair?"

O children! O happy children!
You will never know what you miss.
A child's pure heart for ever
Makes its own world of bliss!
And you, O wistful mother!
Tho' afar in fancy you roam
To the sweet spring-land o'er the water,
Yet your heart stays here in its home.

B. M. BROMLEY.

Orange Free State.